

**AMENDED CLAIM SET:**

1. - 15. (cancelled).

16. (new) Spherical particles for thermal spraying, consisting essentially of a yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound and having a breaking strength of at least 10 MPa and an average particle diameter of 15 to 80  $\mu\text{m}$ .

17. (new) The spherical particles of claim 16, wherein said spherical particles are obtained by granulating yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound fines having a Fisher diameter of up to 0.6  $\mu\text{m}$  into granules and firing said granules.

18. (new) The spherical particles of claim 17, wherein said granules are fired at a temperature of 1500 to 1800°C.

19. (new) The spherical particles of claim 16, having an average particle diameter of 15 to 60  $\mu\text{m}$ .

20. (new) The spherical particles of claim 16 wherein said yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound is a yttrium or lanthanide oxide or yttrium or lanthanide compound oxide.

21. (new) The spherical particles of claim 16, wherein said yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound is at least one selected from the group consisting of yttrium oxide and ytterbium oxide.

22. (new) A thermal sprayed component comprising a substrate having a surface and a coating of the yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound particles of claim 16 thermally sprayed to the substrate surface.

23. (new) Spherical particles for thermal spraying, consisting essentially of a yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound and having a bulk density of at least  $1.0 \text{ g/cm}^3$ , an aspect ratio of up to 2, and a cumulative volume of pores with a radius of up to  $1 \text{ }\mu\text{m}$  which is less than  $0.5 \text{ cm}^3/\text{g}$ .

24. (new) The spherical particles of claim 23, wherein said spherical particles are obtained by granulating yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound having an average particle diameter of  $0.01$  to  $5 \text{ }\mu\text{m}$  and firing said granules.

25. (new) The spherical particles of claim 24, wherein said granules are fired at a temperature of  $1200$  to  $1800^\circ\text{C}$ .

26. (new) The spherical particles of claim 23 having a particle size distribution in which a particle diameter D90, D50 and D10 corresponds to 90 vol%, 50 vol% and 10 vol% accumulation, respectively, wherein D90 is up to 50  $\mu\text{m}$  and the ratio of D50 to a Fisher diameter is up to 5.

27. (new) The spherical particles of claim 26 wherein D10 is at least 10  $\mu\text{m}$ , and the particles have a dispersion index of up to 0.6.

28. (new) The spherical particles of claim 23 wherein said yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound is a yttrium or lanthanide oxide or yttrium or lanthanide compound oxide.

29. (new) The spherical particles of claim 23, wherein said yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound is at least one selected from the group consisting of yttrium oxide and ytterbium oxide.

30. (new) A thermal sprayed component comprising a substrate having a surface and a coating of the yttrium or lanthanide-containing compound particles of claim 23 thermally sprayed to the substrate surface.